

## Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AID-05 ARAE-00 /014 W

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P R 141820Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2802

DEA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LIMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0402

DEPARTMENT FOR S/NM

DEA FOR EO/CUSACK, EOIS/SEARS, AD/JENSEN, A/DUGIN

CARACAS FOR DEA

LIMA FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE

FROM AMBASSADOR

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR CO

SUBJ: OPERATION KITCHEN

REF: BOGOTA 12018

1. IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT THERE IS SOME APPARENT DIS-SATISFACTION ON THE PART OF DEA AND STATE AS TO THE PROGRESS OF OPERATION KITCHEN AND WITH THE SUPERVISION OF IT BY SAIC GONZALEZ. I AM BOTH PUZZLED AND DISMAYED BY THIS REACTION AND DO NOT FRANKLY UNDERSTAND IT. IT IS MY VIEW (AND THE VIEW OF ALL OUT-SIDE EXPERTS WHO HAVE COME IN TO SURVEY IT) THAT THE OPERATION HAS FUNCTIONED WELL AND THAT IN BALANCE IT HAS BEEN FRUITFUL (SEE BOGOTA 12018). IT IS TRUE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME PROBLEMS, AND WE HAVE REPORTED THESE, INCLUDING SLOW ARRIVALS OF EQUIPMENT AND NON-PRODUCTIVITY ON THE PART OF SOME CI'S. NO OPERATION OF THIS KIND, HOWEVER, IS EVER PROBLEM-FREE. THE POINT TO BE  
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STRESSED IS THAT THE PROBLEMS ARE NOT, IN OUR JUDGMENT, THE RE-

SULT OF POOR ADMINISTRATION OR SUPERVISION; THEY ARE, RATHER, THINGS THAT NO ONE IS PARTICULARLY TO BLAME FOR; IN FACT, MOST OF THEM HAVE BEEN SOLVED AND THE OPERATION IS PROCEEDING SMOOTHLY.

2. I AM PARTICULARLY DISMAYED BY THE INDICATION THAT THERE MAY BE CRITICISM OF SAIC GONZALEZ. I WANT TO STRESS MY STRONG BELIEF AND OPINION THAT SAIC GONZALEZ HAS DONE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL WITH REGARD TO KITCHEN (WHICH HE DREAMED UP TO BEGIN WITH), AS WELL AS WITH THE NORMAL AND ON-GOING DEA OPERATION HERE. AS I HAVE OBSERVED, THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED IN GETTING KITCHEN OFF THE GROUND ARE ALMOST ENDEMIC IN A FIRST-TIME OPERATION OF THIS SORT. GONZALEZ HAS WORKED HARD TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS AS THEY AROSE, AND TO DEVELOP NEW TACTICS AS IT PROCEEDED. HIS EFFORTS ARE TO BE APPLAUDED, NOT CRITICIZED.

3. IT IS NATURALLY DISAPPOINTING THAT A LARGER NUMBER OF CLANDESTINE LABORATORIES HAVE NOT BEEN SEIZED, BUT WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THERE WILL BE SOME BETTER RESULTS IN THIS REGARD IN THE FUTURE. IN THE MEAN TIME, THE AMOUNTS OF COCAINE SEIZED; MAJOR DEFENDANTS INDICTED, HARD INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPED, AND THE HIGH DEGREE OF COOPERATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHICH HAS BEEN ACHIEVED HAVE MORE THAN JUSTIFIED THE OPERATION. I THEREFORE WANT TO MAKE CLEAR TO ALL CONCERNED THAT SAIC GONZALEZ ENJOYS MY COMPLETE SUPPORT, THAT I BELIEVE FIRMLY THAT HE HAS DONE VERY WELL IN THIS OPERATION, AND I BELIEVE KITCHEN IS PROCEEDING AS SMOOTHLY AS ANYBODY WOULD HAVE EVER HAD REASON TO BELIEVE. I HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT INTRAMURAL CRITICISM--WHICH I SINCERELY DO NOT BELIEVE IS WARRANTED--WILL BE DROPPED.

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